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IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A compact, fiber reinforced rod for optical cables comprising:

a plurality of elongated fiber members encased in a matrix of a UV ~~curable~~ cured vinyl ester resin material; and

an outer topcoat layer substantially surrounding said ~~plurality of elongated fiber members~~ matrix.

2. (original) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said elongated fiber members comprises an E-type glass fiber member.

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3. (original) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said elongated fiber members comprises an S-type glass fiber member.

4. (original) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said elongated fiber members are selected from the group consisting of E-type glass fiber members, an S-type glass fiber members, and combinations thereof.

5. (original) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said elongated fiber members are selected from the group consisting of E-type glass fiber members, S-type glass fiber members, high strength synthetic strands of poly(p-phenylene-2,6-benzobisoxazole) fiber members, and combinations thereof.

6. (currently amended) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said UV ~~curable~~ cured vinyl ester resin material is selected from the group consisting of Vinch 500 and 17-41B UV cured vinyl ester resin, both manufactured by Zeon Technologies.

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7. (original) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said outer topcoat layer comprises a polybutylene terephthalate/polyether glycol copolymer material.

8. (original) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said outer topcoat layer comprises an ethylene acrylic acid copolymer material.

9. - 22. (canceled)

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23. (new) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said plurality of fibers comprising:
a plurality of E-type glass roving fibers; and
a plurality of S-type glass roving fibers.

24. (new) The reinforced rod of claim 23, wherein said plurality of fibers further comprises a plurality of high strength synthetic strand members.

25. (new) The reinforced rod of claim 23, wherein said plurality of fibers further comprises a plurality of high strength aramid strands.

26. (new) The reinforced rod of claim 24, wherein said plurality of fibers further comprises a plurality of polyphenylene terephthalate strand members.

27. (new) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said plurality of fibers comprises:

a plurality of E-type glass roving fibers;
a plurality of S-type glass roving fibers; and
a plurality of high strength aramid strands.

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28. (new) The reinforced rod of claim 1, wherein said plurality of fibers comprises:

a plurality of E-type glass roving fibers;

a plurality of S-type glass roving fibers; and

a plurality of high strength polyphenylene terephthalate strands.

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